Lexical and Grammatical Patterns in Pakistani Intermediate Students' English Compositions: A Corpus-Based Approach

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Abstract
This study aimed to discover the errors in the essays of Pakistani intermediate language learners in a public sector college. These learners, while writing, often faced difficulties with regard to grammar, syntax, and lexicology. The paper in question answers the aforementioned problems. The sample comprised two hundred learners. There were two hundred males only. They composed these essays during the entire semester. The results of the study reflect that the highest occurring errors belong to the intralingual category. The second highest was in the interlingual category, and interlanguage errors were the least to be found. Therefore, the study very clearly reveals to ELT instructors how intralingual errors may be avoided. Further, it will tremendously assist instructors who wish to teach any English composition course at an intermediate level.

Key Words: error analysis, interference, interlingual, intralingual, interlanguage.

Introduction
Errors are an integral part of language learning, and the process becomes impossible without making them. When children acquire their L1, they commit several errors to become accurate and fluent in it. It has also been assumed that learners are heavily reliant on their L1 in second language acquisition (Gass & Selinker, 2001). Writing, in turn, is one of the second-language skills that cannot be improved without learners' committing mistakes and errors. To improve upon the quality of teaching and help students, this research is conducted within the framework of analyzing various kinds of errors in essays written in English by Pakistani intermediate students who severely lack English. The knowledge of the error becomes all the more useful to teachers and learners in devising different ways of attaining the desired results faster. This will also make the learners aware of the nature of errors they commit while writing. A cognitivist view underlines that errors show what the learner has achieved in the process of acquiring the

target language rather than how well he can learn.

Corder (1967) argued that errors bear witness to learning taking place. The phenomenon of Error Analysis considers the role of the errors committed by language learners in second language acquisition. According to Richards (1971), the classification of errors should include the following:

a) Overgeneralization covers cases where learners create a deviant structure based on their experience with another structure in the target language.
b) Ignorance of rule restriction, where the rule or structure is not observed as it exists.
c) Incomplete application of rules occurs when the learners have not fully applied a certain structure needed to produce acceptable sentences.
d) The hypothesized false conception arises from a misunderstanding of differences in the target language. (as cited in Khansir, 2012)

According to Ellis (2003), error analysis is very important because it provides the researcher with a methodology to study learners' language. Brown (1980) maintains that an error is reflective of a learner's interlanguage ability. The principal purpose of this study is to investigate and explore the most widely recognized mistakes committed by intermediate students in their articles and to understand those mistakes.

This research will ultimately create awareness among intermediate learners by identifying errors that these learners make in the process of pursuing intermediary education. Eventually, the findings shall be multidimensional in nature, assisting the learners in overcoming errors while learning the target language, helping teachers and instructors incorporate these findings into designing new syllabi for language learners and generating different strategies to eliminate such errors in their writings.

Literature Review
The significance of error analysis as an even more relevant and even more valuable tool for the pedagogical purposes of Second Language Acquisition has made its way into an area for the past thirty years of researchers straddling the fence. In this regard, the movement of researchers from Contrastive Analysis to Error Analysis in studying learners' errors implies that CA has now left contemporary researchers longing to perform scrutiny into the factors affecting performance with respect to L2 learners, for instance, communication strategies and training techniques, avoidance strategies, overgeneralization, etc. (Khansir, 2012; Haider, Ahmad, & Ali, 2024). In short, between the last part of the 1940s through the 1960s, the Contrastive Analysis was the essential hypothesis fundamental to the investigation of SLA. The primary point of this hypothesis was to look at L1 and L2 or quite a few language frameworks to expose their particular examples (Fisiak, 1981). Fisiak (1981), moreover, features that the worth of the Contrastive Examination lies in the option to focus on regions subject to interference and error. In this way, the impedance of L1 can't be viewed as the sole reason for blunders committed by L2 students paralinguistic includes additionally influences these mistakes. At times, a very poor theoretical knowledge of grammar impedes the learning process of a

language and causes many errors.
Richards (1974) suggested the following five sources of errors:
1. Language Transfer
2. Transfer of training
3. Strategies of second language and learning
4. Strategies of second language communication, and
5. Overgeneralization of Target Language linguistic material. (as cited in Sarfaraz, 2011)

SLA researchers after 1970 turned to Error Analysis. Error Analysis aims to examine what errors made by L2 learners are likely to occur when producing the Target Language. Then, at that point, an examination is made between mistakes made by L2 students in TL and TL itself. In SLA examinations, specialists respect it essential to sufficiently explore all stages and cycles in language securing and represent all complexities engaged with how the TL is procured in each regard. As per Corder (1967), mistakes fill three fundamental needs: to inform the educators about what to instruct, give data to the specialist about the members' way of learning, and add to figuring out speculations for the students to test in the objective language.

There are two ways errors can be categorized: interlingual transfers and intralingual transfers (Brown, 1980). Interlingual error is one in which L2 learners commit errors on account of interference with the rules of their L1 upon L2. Before a learner has had full exposure to the rules of the target language, L1 will be the only language system the learner can rely upon to make use of language constructions (Brown, 1980). The idea of the interlinguistic error is that by negative transfer of L2 language chunks, intralingual errors usually occur in the process of learning a language, for instance, overgeneralization of grammar rules within the framework of L2, wherein the learner has difficulty relating the rules of L2 to certain relevant conditions (Richards, 1974; Dilshad, Shah & Ahmad, 2023; Shah, Ali, & Ahmad, 2024).

Interlanguage errors form the third category of errors described by Selinker (1972). On the one hand, this theory proposes that the learner's language could be described as a dialect in its own right, with its own system of rules and features. It considers interlanguage as an intermediate stage: L2 learners merge the new information they are getting regarding L2 with their previous knowledge regarding the first language (L1); this unavoidably results in a set of rules and structures that are distinct from the rules of L1 and L2. Researchers have recommended a few terms for interlanguage. Corder (1971) holds that the idea of "eccentric vernaculars" looks to pinpoint the peculiarities of a student's language; he likewise keeps up with that momentary capability as an approach to deciding the non-static nature of the student's creating language arrangement. In Selinker's view (1972), interlanguage appreciates methodologies like improvement, decrease, overgeneralization, move, conventional language, oversights, replacements, and restructuring (Sarfaraz, 2011; Kolachi et al., 2024; Hafeez, Iqbal, & Imran, 2021).

As per Corder (1967), prospective and diagnostic evaluations use learners' errors. In this context, the teachers would assess the learners' errors to ascertain their degree of competence and performance problems and to adapt materials that could

address the learners' problems. Also, a manifestation of errors is an evident example of learning taking place in a positive direction. Errors can be very potent in getting researchers to understand the ongoing language process in acquiring the target language if they adopt a logical mindset". Also, the error analysis of L2 learners has a practical significance that might aid teaching professionals in incorporating error feedback in their language classes. He (Corder, 1967) further believes that for researchers and language teachers, the errors of usage committed by learners can be of immense significance.

Many studies were conducted by nonnative speakers in the English language to ascertain the types of writing errors usually found in learners not originating from an English background, with a view to developing appropriate materials. Jayasundara and Premarathna (2011) conducted an experiment in Sri Lanka that analyzed errors in writing and speaking performances by first-year undergraduates of the Uva Wellassa University. The participants in this study were 23 male and 22 female undergraduate students. The results show that most errors occurred in the grammar area, both in writing and speaking. Furthermore, this showed that two dependent variables were involved: newspaper reading and errors in grammar and syntax. It also gave research indications about the style adopted by the students to internalize L2 rules. Thus, these findings help language teachers better tailor their curricula with target-oriented objectives to eventually use an effective teaching methodology (Imran, Sultana, & Ahmed, 2023; Phulpoto, Oad, & Imran, 2024).

Yasemin Kirkgoz (2010) directed one more review. It breaks down mistakes in 120 papers composed by 86 grown-up new Turkish students during their most memorable semester in a novice language capability program at Cukurova College. She separated two significant blunder types, interlingual and intralingual, with additional developments. As indicated by the exploration discoveries, most mistakes were interlingual, mirroring the impact of the student's most memorable language.

Alhaysony (2020) investigates interlanguage errors in the written compositions of Arab EFL learners through a corpus-based analysis. Errors are classified into inter-lingual and intra-lingual, with inter-lingual errors being greatly affected by the learners' mother tongue, Arabic. This study finds that among the common errors are incorrect use of articles, wrong preposition usage, and verb forms. The paper highlights the need for contextual teaching approaches to deal with native language interference and to improve English writing. Error analysis becomes important in formulating teaching strategies that make learners aware of their linguistic problems. Its findings offer valuable insights into how EFL instruction can be customized to meet specific learner needs, ultimately contributing to more effective second language acquisition.

Cui and Zhao (2021) examine grammatical errors in English essays written by Chinese undergraduates, highlighting recurring patterns and their underlying causes. Using a corpus of 150 student essays, the research identifies prominent error types, including verb tense misuse, article omissions, and subject-verb agreement violations. The findings suggest that intralingual errors, particularly overgeneralization and incomplete rule application, are more prevalent than interlingua errors. The authors state that Chinese EFL learners have a heavy

dependence upon native language transfer while exhibiting a limited understanding of English grammar rules. The study also recommends incorporating error-focused instruction and targeted practice activities into the EFL curriculum to confront these challenges. It provides practical insights into enhancing grammatical accuracy in learners' written English, contributing to the growing literature on second language acquisition in Chinese educational contexts. Dagneauz et al. (2022) explore the role of learner corpora in second language acquisition (SLA) research, emphasizing their utility in analyzing language use and error production patterns. It discusses methodological advances in corpus compilation, annotation, and analysis to better understand learner interlanguage. By using examples from various learner corpora, the study demonstrates how corpora can uncover recurring linguistic errors and inform SLA theories. The authors propose that language teaching incorporates corpus-based tools so instructors can design data-driven interventions that address specific learner difficulties. The findings evidence the importance of corpus-based approaches in determining pedagogical practices, stipulating error patterns across learner groups, and developing further empirical

research within SLA.

In another Malaysian study, the researchers did a thorough job of investigating. Brevet students were sampled on the basis of Arabic-speaking; the researchers classified and categorized their findings of errors. They found that approximately one-third of the errors that L2 learners made were due to L1 transfer. Moreover, most of the errors came from the overapplication of L2. They strongly advised promoting learner interaction in L2 outside of class and with peers to reduce errors stemming from negative L1 transfer. They also emphasized that teaching rules and conventions of writing are important considerations that should not be neglected.

Methodology

For this research study, a sample of 200 English composition essays of 200 adult learners of English Composition courses were examined. This course of English composition was offered to freshman intermediate students studying at the Pakistani Govt. Sector Public College, located in Karachi. They were enrolled in their first year, which was part of a two-year Intermediate Program in Commerce. Their ages ranged from 17-19, and all were male. The duration of the course was around nine months. It started in August 2023 and finished in the mid of April 2024. Since it was a three-credit hour course, there would be three classes a week. The students were tested thrice in the entire semester. There were two mid-term exams that happened in the 6th and 12th week from the start of the semester. The final exam was conducted last month, and the entire content covered during the course was tested.

Data Collection

Random sample, based on Ellis (19, was used to collect sample data94). Written essays were examined to mark and categorize the errors committed by first-year intermediate college students.

Analysis

Corder (1974) expounded a three-step Error Analysis technique that has been incorporated in this study to analyze the data.
(1) Collection of sample errors
(2) Identification of errors
(3) Description of errors

Error classification may be categorized into 5 fundamental kinds: Grammatical, Syntactical, Lexical, Orthographic, and Morphological errors. Consequently, the major purpose of this study is to bring awareness to the learners about the errors that adult first-year intermediate college students make in writing their prompts. Hence, the findings of this study may help language learners protect themselves from falling into such errors while composing different types of essays related to their academic as well as non-academic endeavors.

The source of data for this research study is two hundred students' essays written on two different topics. Each paper, with a word count going from 250 to 350, was taken from the arrangement of students' tasks composed throughout English Composition and its last evaluation. The data collection spanned a semester of four and a half months. Respective language instructors indicated all detected errors. The detected errors were further classified under Grammatical, Syntactical, Lexical, Orthographic, and Morphological Errors.

The errors have been categorized into three general classifications:

1- Interlingual errors
2- Intralingual errors
3- Interlanguage errors

Table1. Classification of Errors

Intralingual Errors	
1. Overgeneralization	81
2. Overgeneralization (perfect case)	11
3. Article errors	127
4. Punctuation errors	117
Morphological Errors	
1. Pluralization	96
Grammatical Interference	
1. Passive voice errors	236
2. Tense Errors	186
Interlingual Errors	
Lexical Interference	
1. Prepositional errors	167
2. Word for Word Translation	136
3. Verb Tense	127
Orthographical Errors	
1. Spelling errors	108
2. Capitalization	33
Syntactical Errors	
1. Fragment errors	87
2. Parallelism errors	63
3. Comma Splice	56
4. Run On	59
Interlanguage Errors	41
Total	1731

Table2. Examples of Errors

Intralingual Errors
1. Overgeneralization
Pakistan is one of the countries in the world that has nuclear power. Another very dangerous weapon. It is one of the Muslim countries which contain nuclear bombs. The education system of the world depends on… Some teachers are teaching … The supporters of public sector universities support…
2. Overgeneralization (perfect case)
After admitting their children to private education…
3. Article errors
The same is true for those who are against private education Our country has parking lots where the most expensive cars… Education is the key to success. Their basis should be a private education He has to pay a huge advance fee. Below the poverty line It is a matter of your choice. The every topic But provides a good quality education.
4. Punctuation errors
On the other hand, private education offers… But the point is, that which education.
Morphological Errors
1. Pluralization
After admitting their children to private education
Grammatical Interference
1. Passive voice errors
They cannot afford such expensive education. The quality of education should be maintained. It should be taken care of…
2. Tense errors
If Pakistan had paid loans, there would be no pressure from the IMF. Private education is better than public education. Did public education not provide a good quality education? Is private education more expensive than public education? And a common man cannot pay expenses. They should banned from all private education centers.
Interlingual Errors
Lexical Interference
1. Prepositional errors
Secondly, it comes to the expenses of gaining an education. The government should pay attention to private education They should banned from all private education centers. There is no doubt that private education comprises with great curriculum.
2. Word for Word Translation
As they are all and all.
3. Verb Tense
I am studying at a private sector university for three years.

1. Spelling errors	
Missile,	
Some teachers are teaching on their own.	
Affordable	
Tuition	
The most prominent.	
Public sector providers	
2. Capitalization	
recently, Pakistan has tested its missile…	
There is no option but to Defend Pakistan.	
They attract other People…	
However, Private education…	
Public education Provides…	
Private education is very important.	
Syntactical Errors	
1. Fragment errors	
Pakistan has all the right to defend itself.	
So is for private education.	
Although being expensive.	
As it gives rise to double standards of education.	
As education is the backbone of the country.	
2. Parallelism errors	
Private education offers wide learning resources, punctual teachers, and the best possible way to shape students' futures.	
The dominating features of private education are quality of education, punctuality of teachers, variety of resources, and future opportunities.	
3. Comma Splice	
Students study at the university, and they work at a local restaurant.	
4. Run On	
Parents are paying high amounts to universities and are content with it.	
Interlanguage Errors	
Build a child's mind mentally, physically, and diplomatically.	

Discussion

Table 1 displays categories of error types in students' essays. Three categories with 16 error types were identified from the corpus of a sample of 200 students' essays. The findings reflect that the number of intralingual errors committed by the learners in their writing prompts was comparatively higher than interlingual errors.

854 intralingual errors indicate that the learners tend to form their own linguistic patterns to accomplish writing tasks, which are different from errors that occur due to L2 intervention. They have been divided into five types. These types refer to overgeneralization, article, punctuation, and morphological and grammatical errors. Morphological and grammatical errors are further divided into subcategories. Two subcategories for grammatical errors are passive voice and tense errors. Meanwhile, morphological errors are broken down into a single subcategory: pluralization. Similarly, 836 interlingual errors have been traced out from the corpus. These errors are further divided into three major categories: lexical, orthographical, and syntactical. Lexical interference entails three

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subcategories: prepositional errors, word-for-word translation, and verb tense errors. Orthographical errors are then divided into two subcategories: spelling and capitalization. Lastly, syntactical errors are broken into four subcategories: fragment, parallelism, comma splice, and run-on errors.

The most frequently occurring errors are of intralingual category within which passive voice happens to supersede with 236, followed by tense errors 186. On the other hand, 836 interlingual errors are found in the compositions of students, where prepositional errors are committed most with 167, followed by 136 word-for-word translation errors. However, interlanguage errors rarely occurred, with a total of 41.

Results and Findings

The corpus language was selected using Ellis's criteria (1995). Written compositions from 200 freshmen undergraduate students were collected, covering two topics, "Pakistan Has Every Right to Defend Itself" and "Private Education versus Public Education," with word counts of between 250 and 350. They were given sufficient time to complete and edit their respective compositions (Ellis, 1997).

In writing compositions, the use of prescribed grammatical rules leading to the formation of well-textured text remains of utmost importance. Concerns for accuracy in writing techniques have always taken precedence over concerns for fluency in spoken expression. Thus, the readers will not condone or be forgiving of the errors that target language learners commit in writing." The medium of teaching in the sample of this research was English. However, the errors captured show a level of ignorance of grammatical rules on the part of the students. They employ their available knowledge to interpret and manage problems with a newborn lingua, more often than not contriving their own "rules" that are neither English grammar rules nor those of their mother. English grammar is not Rules for Urdu. The work gives evidence that numerous types of interference errors are present in the essays of Pakistani undergraduate university students. These interferences were intralingual, interlingual, and interlanguage.

Conclusion

This research study has examined different types of errors committed by adult Pakistani first-year intermediate students who studied the English Composition course in their first year of enrollment in a two-year college program. The results could be applied to all English language learners in Pakistan so that they may avoid such errors. The knowledge will provide insight to the syllabus designers to incorporate all the aforementioned errors in their syllabi in a way that the learners will find them in an integrated manner. It may also be suggested that the errors of the learners should not be called failures; rather, they could be termed as a real indicator of students' steady advancement in the understanding of the linguistic system of the target language. Errors also present a very clear window to teachers and researchers into how a language is being acquired and what strategy is being employed by the learner in the discovery of such a language (Corder, 1967). Errors show the teacher what the learner understands, has acquired, or is confused about.

The final aim is to enable teachers to guide students in identifying, reducing, and overcoming their learning problems, which may help them to articulate various responses and reflections about their errors.

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